

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This document provides guidance for park, recreation, and open space development in College Station over the next decade. The Master Plan was developed in accordance with the city's Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted in 1997. The plan has also been coordinated with the city's Greenways Master Plan, which was adopted by the City Council in May 1999. The overall planning effort extended over several years and involved input from many sources including focus groups, surveys, appointed advisory boards, and staff. Development of a Master Plan was the number one goal of the Parks & Recreation Board in 1999. The Plan was originally adopted by the College Station City Council in July 1999, with the provision that reviews be completed every three years. The current Plan was revised in 2002.

This document is composed of seven major sections along with various tables, figures, maps, and appendices. It also refers to several specific master plans for large parks or major planning areas such as the Lick Creek Park Master Plan, Wolf Pen Creek Corridor and W.A. Tarrow Park (formerly known as Lincoln/Wayne Smith Corridor). These individual planning documents were developed over the past decade and also involved numerous public meetings, special committees, and focus groups. The seven major sections included in this document are:

- Section I: Introduction**
- Section II: Goals & Objectives**
- Section III: Plan Development Process**
- Section IV: Area & Facility Concepts & Standards**
- Section V: Inventory of Parks & Facilities**
- Section VI: Needs Assessment & Identification**
- Section VII: Prioritization of Needs & Plan Implementation**

The estimated 2002 population for the City of College Station is 69,612, including approximately 10,000 students who live on the Texas A&M University campus. This Parks Master Plan does not include these students in the planning process due to the availability of on-campus recreation programs and facilities that are provided by the university. Growth trends for College Station used to project future land, facility, and program needs are based on an average annual growth rate of approximately three percent. Some areas that are not currently in the city limits are included in the population projections due to anticipated annexations.

The College Station parks system currently includes a variety of parks and facilities located throughout the community. There are also several undeveloped park sites that are included in the inventory, which will be developed during the time frame of this plan. Several key components of the existing system include:

- **33 developed parks**
- **10 undeveloped park sites**
- **559.27 acres of developed park land**

- **638.08 acres of undeveloped park land**
- **Cooperative agreements with the local school district**
- **Strong and diversified program of leisure activities**

The ratio of existing park land acreage per 1,000 population for neighborhood, mini, and community parks is approximately 8.92 acres. This includes 4.76 acres for community parks and 4.16 acres for neighborhood and mini parks. It is the intent of this plan to maintain a minimum of 7.0 acres of neighborhood, mini and community park land per 1,000 population.

The plan identifies existing and projected deficiencies in both recreation facilities and park land by park zone based upon current and future population estimates. The needs analysis includes three approaches to determine projected requirements: *a) standards-based approach; b) resource-based approach; and c) demand-based approach.* These different approaches are needed because of the unique features of recreation, park, and open space resources, and they allow flexibility in determining the overall needs of the community. In terms of facility and park land development for 2002-2012, the following general categories represent current priority needs:

1. **Softball Fields**
2. **Soccer Fields**
3. **Trails**
4. **Natural Areas**
5. **Indoor Recreation Facilities**
6. **Neighborhood Parks – Park Zones 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10**

Finally, the plan provides direction for the implementation process, including a timetable of specific development projects for the first five years. Priorities and goals are established to support the implementation process, along with other recommendations that include regular reviews and updating of the plan itself.